

SAFETY & HEALTH NOTE

Assistant Secretary for Environment, Safety & Health

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NIOSH Issues Revised Respirator Certification Requirements

Impact

All particulate air purifying respirators purchased after July 10, 1998, must be certified under the NEW National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) revised certification requirements. The revised certification requirements should be considered at all Department of Energy (DOE) sites when purchasing or using particulate respirators.

Overview

NIOSH published new regulations at 42 Code of Federal Regulations Part 84 (42 CFR 84), amending certification requirements for particulate respirators and replacing certain Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA) regulations at 30 CFR 11. The regulation defines the rules and procedures for approval of respiratory protective devices used to protect workers in hazardous environments. It also revises test requirements for particulate respirators and prefilters for gas and vapor respirators. The responsibility for respirator testing and certification will reside with NIOSH. MSHA and NIOSH will continue joint review and approval for respirators used for certain mine emergency devices, such as are used in mine rescue and other mine emergencies. This rule is one of a series whose purpose is to modify current respirator approval requirements for all respirators. **These new certification categories apply only to nonpowered, air purifying, particulate-filter respirators.**

NIOSH published this regulation in the Federal Register on June 8, 1995, with a

three-year grandfather clause to allow respirator programs to be updated. After July 10, 1998, only respirators and filters certified as complying with 42 CFR 84 will be sold by respirator manufacturers, and any product approved under 30 CFR 11 will not be allowed to be sold.

Filter Requirements

Three series of filters are established in the regulation: N, R, and P. Each series has three levels of filter efficiency: 95 percent, 99 percent, and 99.97 percent, to make a total of nine classes of filters. The following table illustrates the minimum efficiencies to be demonstrated by each filter.

Table 1. Filter Classifications Under 42 CFR 84

42 CFR 84		Aerosol Test	
Minimum Efficiency	NaCl Non-oil aerosols*	DOP includes oil aerosols*	DOP includes oil aerosols
95%	N95	R95	P95
99%	N99	R99	P99
99.97%	N100	R100	P100

* may have time use restriction on this filter series

Please call 1-800-35-NIOSH to receive a copy of the regulation, or access it online at <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh>.



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